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SECRET/NOFORN

INR WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
OF DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMAN RIGHTS

No. 25, October 4, 1977

TRANSFERRED TO OTHER AGENCY
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LATIN AMERICA

Argentina

Right of Exile Option Restored. Embassy Buenos Aires reports that Argentine authorities announced on September 26 restoration of the "right of option" which under the Argentine constitution, permits state of siege prisoners to petition for permission to leave the country. The new regulations governing submission and review of such petitions are more restrictive than past procedures, but friends and relatives of detainees have hopes that more prisoners now will be released. Also announced on September 26 were more flexible detention procedures for state of siege prisoners: some may now be held under house arrest and others placed in a parole program. (CONFIDENTIAL, State 234424, September 29; Buenos Aires 7241, September 28)

INR Comment. The restoration of the "right of option," the parole program, a reactivated judiciary trying subversive cases, and the continuing publication of detention-release lists for state of siege prisoners are significant, albeit partially cosmetic, steps. [redacted] substantiates both President Videla's personal commitment to curbing human rights abuses and his efforts to overcome domestic political constraints in order to implement corrective measures. Serious abuses continue, however, including the summary disposal of suspected terrorists and the mysterious disappearances of non-terrorists. (SECRET/NOFORN)

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